Telephone Exchanges connected with OFC in Tehri, Uttranchal

†3824. SHRI MANOHAR KANT DHYANI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of exchanges in Tehri provided with reliable media at the end of year 2001-2002;

(b) the status of thirteen microwave system exchanges and whether these are working satisfactorily and if not the measures being taken to provide them with reliable media; and

(c) the status of four satellite-based and ten overhead media and the measures being taken to keep the services being provided by them satisfactorily?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) 34 telephone exchanges in Tehri revenue district have been provided with reliable transmission media at the end of year 2001-2002.

(b) All the thirteen exchanges having microwave transmission media are working satisfactorily at present.

(c) Out of total of 4 exchanges connected on satellite system, Nainbag exchange has been provided with Optical Fibre Cable System. Remaining three exchanges are working satisfactorily on Satellite systems.

Out of Total of 10 exchanges connected on overhead system, Kampty and Paukhal exchanges have been provided with reliable media during 2001-2002. Remaining eight telephone exchanges could not be provided with reliable transmission media during 2001-2002 due to non-availability of materials on time. Out of these seven telephone exchanges are planned to be covered by December, 2002 progressively. Remaining one telephone exchange at Buldiyana is coming under Tehri dam submerged area and there is a plan to shift this exchange to

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Uppu with reliable medium by March, 2003, subject to availability of resources.

Software Programme for Visually Handicapped

3825. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether any software programme has been developed for the visually impaired handicapped persons in the country;

(b) if so, the salient features thereof;

(c) the centres where such programmes are being run for the blind; and

(d) the proposed additional centres to be opened during the next five years in different parts of the country to bring hope for the blind?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): (a) Yes, Sir. Under a Jai Vigyan National S&T Mission project being executed by Webel Mediatronics Ltd., Kolkata and IIT, Kharagpur, the Department of Information Technology is getting certain hardware and software developed for the benefit of the visually handicapped in the country.

(b) The following software programmes have been developed for Braille literacy in major Indian languages:

(i) Test to Braille transcription and its printing on an indigenously developed computerized Braille embosser.

(ii) Braille to Text conversion using customized keyboard.

(c) As part of this project, thirty blind schools in different parts of the country have been identified where the systems are being installed. The list of these comprising 5 Resource Centres and 25 Training Centres is given in the statement. (*See* below)